

**RURAL LANDLESS EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME
IN UTTAR PRADESH
(An Evaluation)**

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Center 'O' Aliganj Housing (Extension) Scheme, Lucknow-226 020

November, 1985

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Chapter-1

INTRODUCTION

1. Scope and Importance

Unemployment becomes an acutely serious problem when it is coterminous with poverty. And this is found to be the case with landless labourers in rural areas. Growth of agriculture leads to little direct benefits to them; and opportunities for wage labour in agriculture which is the only way through which they can benefit from agricultural growth, have not been expanding fast enough to effectively employ the growing ranks of the landless. According to 1981 Census, the total population of these labourers in Uttar Pradesh is about 39 lakhs, accounting for approximately 15 per cent of the total rural work force. Majority of them are landless and belong to the families constituting weaker sections of society and falling below the poverty line. This segment of population in rural areas largely depends upon wage employment and has virtually no source of income during the lean period of agriculture. A number of schemes particularly the 'Food For Work' and 'National Rural Employment Programme' (NREP) were, therefore, launched by the Government to provide employment and alleviate poverty in rural areas. But to ensure better efficacy and that too in a more direct and specific manner, a new scheme called the 'Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme' (RLEGP) was started in the year 1983-84 with the sole aim of providing employment opportunities specifically to landless labourers during the lean period of agriculture. The two basic objectives of the programme are as under:

1. To improve and expand employment opportunities to rural landless with a view to providing guarantee of employment to atleast one member of every landless labour household upto 100 days in a year; and,
2. To create durable assets for strengthening the rural infrastructure, leading to rapid growth of rural economy.¹

The scheme is centrally sponsored, and financial allocations to different States/Union Territories under the programme are made on the basis of 75 per cent weightage to the strength of agricultural workers and marginal farmers and 25 per cent weightage to the incidence of poverty. The specific projects formulated at the district level and then finalised at the State level are submitted to the Central Committee at the national level for release of central assistance. At least fifty per cent of the total cost of the project constitute wage component and the rest can be utilised as non-wage component for meeting the cost of raw materials, administrative and supervisory expenses and transportation of foodgrains.

The work projects, which can be taken up under this programme for implementation in rural areas, consist of construction of rural link roads, construction/renovation of field channels to maximise utilisation of existing irrigation potential, land development and reclamation of waste or degraded

¹ Government of India : Instructions for Implementation of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi, Sept. 1983.

land, social forestry and soil and water conservation works. These projects can be taken up for execution during any part of the year, but labour intensive operations are to be concentrated during lean periods of agriculture. Moreover, Contractors/ Middlemen should not be engaged for executing the project work at all.

Considering the main objective of providing employment to atleast one member of every landless household upto 100 days in a year, preference must be given to landless labourers for employment under the programme. Payment of wages to unskilled workers should be made in accordance with the prescribed minimum agricultural wages and those for skilled workers, the provisions as laid down in the Minimum Wages Act should be followed. Besides, the wages are to be paid partly in kind (one Kg. of foodgrains per head per day) and partly (i.e., the balance) in cash.

In Uttar Pradesh, RLEG Programme was started during the financial year of 1983-84 and almost all the districts of the State were covered under it by the end of August, 1984. Since inception of the programme the total amount of money released by the Central Committee upto March, 1985 came to the tune of Rs.13655/- lakh, of which approximately Rs.6547/- lakh were spent on its implementation in the State. In terms of physical achievement, we observe that since inception of the programme the total wage labour employment generated in the State was 563/- lakh mandays upto the year 1984-85 and the quantum of foodgrains distributed during this period was 21,746 tons.

2. Objectives

The present study aims at evaluating the overall performance of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) in Uttar Pradesh. The specific objectives requiring special focus in the present context are as follows :

- (i) To study the socio-economic characteristics of the sample households;
- (ii) To evaluate the extent to which the guidelines prescribed for implementation of the programme have been followed in actual practice;
- (iii) To assess and analyse the impact of RLEG Programme on income and employment of the sample households;
- (iv) To study the kind of durable assets created under the programme and analyse whether they really go in favour of accelerating the development pace of the rural economy; and,
- (v) To study the problems and difficulties encountered in implementation of the programme at various levels and suggest measures for its better efficacy in future.

3. Methodology

The State of Uttar Pradesh is divided into five economic regions, i.e., Western, Central, Eastern, Bundelkhand and Hill. Of these, the present study is carried out confining to the first three economic regions only. The three districts namely Meerut, Rae Bareilly and Allahabad have been selected respectively from these three regions following the criterion of the

highest amount of actual expenditure incurred till March, 1985 on RLEG Programme in a district.

For each of the selected districts, a separate list of blocks, where RLEG Programme has been under implementation, is prepared. Thereafter, one block from each of these lists is selected again following the criterion of the highest amount of actual expenditure incurred on the programme.

At the block level, in the absence of the list of villages, from where beneficiary participants were drawn for programme implementation, we have selected the area of larger concentration of project works in each of the selected blocks. Thereafter, we have interviewed 100 beneficiary participants which were found readily available in the villages falling in the vicinity of each of the selected areas. The details of the sample size are given in the following table :

Table 1.1 : Sample Size

Sl. No.	Names of selected :		Coverage of :	
	Districts	Blocks	Villages (No.)	Beneficiary participants (No.)
1.	Meerut	Mawana	9	100
2.	Rae Bareilly	Deeh	5	100
3.	Allahabad	Kaudihar	6	100
TOTAL	3	3	20	300

The study makes use of the data/information collected from both the secondary as well as primary sources. Regarding the former, the information has been compiled from the relevant

records available at the State, District and Block levels. Whereas the information/data in case of the latter have been collected from the beneficiary participants through the structured questionnaire for landless labour household.

4. Organisation of the Study

The present study is organised in five chapters. The present chapter, which describes the scope and importance of RLEG Programme, objectives, coverage and methodology employed, is followed by a portrayal of socio-economic characteristics of the sample households in the second chapter. The third chapter evaluates the extent to which the central guidelines of the programme have been followed in actual practice at the time of both the planning and implementation. The effectiveness of RLEG Programme in generating income and employment opportunities to landless agricultural households and finally bringing them above the poverty line has been analysed in the fourth chapter. The final chapter endeavours to derive certain significant conclusions which could provide at least some points for making planning and implementation of the programme more efficacious in future.

Chapter-2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

1. Population and Sex Ratio

As stated in the introductory chapter, in all 300 sample households have been interviewed for collection of primary information. The major socio-economic characteristics of the sample beneficiaries are as follows : Of the total size of sample, the households belonging to the Scheduled Caste are as high as 84 per cent. Whereas the backward caste constitute 13.67 per cent of the total sample households and those falling in the category of 'others' are 2.33 per cent only (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 : Distribution of Sample Households by Caste, Population, Sex Ratio and Average Size of Household

(Number/Persons)					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Meerut	Rae Bareilly	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Total Sample Households:	100	100	100	300 (100.00)
	(a) Scheduled Caste	86	78	88	252 (84.00)
	(b) Backward	7	22	12	41 (13.67)
	(c) Others	7	Nil	Nil	7 (2.33)
2.	Total population:	488 (100.00)	454 (100.00)	450 (100.00)	1392 (100.00)
	(a) Male	274 (56.15)	248 (54.63)	265 (58.89)	787 (56.54)
	(b) Female	214 (43.85)	206 (45.37)	185 (41.11)	605 (43.46)
3.	Sex Ratio	781	831	698	769
4.	Average size of household	4.88	4.54	4.50	4.64

Note : The figures given in parentheses against (a), (b), and (c) of Sl. No.1 denote percentages to the total sample households and those recorded against (a) and (b) of Sl. No.2 denote percentages to total population.

Source: Primary Investigation.

An overwhelming majority of the beneficiaries belong to the Scheduled Caste and Backward Communities. The predominance of the Scheduled Caste and backward community among the beneficiaries seems a natural corollary of the fact that the rural landless labour force is constituted mainly by these castes.

The families of the beneficiaries are of lower than average size, with a significantly higher than average male-female ratio. The total population of the 300 sample households is found to be 1392. The males out-number the females and the sex-ratio works out to 769. The average size of household for whole of the operational area of the study comes to 4.64 as compared to the average of 5.5 at the State level. It appears that split-up of a family takes place more frequently among the households having no or low value assets particularly labour class as compared to those holding assets of relatively higher value.

2. Age Structure

About 57 per cent of the total population of the sample households is concentrated in the working age group i.e. 15-60 years (Table 2.2).

Children, i.e. those below 15 years of age constitute around 37 per cent and those falling in the age group '60 years and above' account for about 6 per cent.

Table 2.2 : Distribution of Population by Age

(Number)

Sl. No.	Category	Meerut	Rae Barelli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Below 5 years	86 (17.62)	54 (11.89)	49 (10.89)	189 (13.58)
2.	5 - <15 years	112 (22.95)	114 (25.11)	98 (21.78)	324 (23.28)
3.	15 - <25 years	76 (15.57)	79 (17.40)	103 (22.89)	258 (18.53)
4.	25 - 50 years	162 (33.20)	147 (32.38)	151 (33.56)	460 (33.05)
5.	50 - <60 years	17 (3.48)	39 (8.59)	20 (4.44)	76 (5.46)
6.	60 years and above	35 (7.18)	21 (4.63)	29 (6.44)	85 (6.10)
TOTAL		488 (100.00)	454 (100.00)	450 (100.00)	1392 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source : Primary Investigation.

3. Educational Status

Turning to the educational status, we find that the proportion of illiterates to the total population of the sample households works out to as high as 84.27 per cent, showing variations from 82 per cent in Allahabad to 82.59 per cent in Meerut and 88.33 per cent in Rae Barelli (Table 2.3).

Thus, the literacy percentage for the population of the total sample households comes to 15.73 with minimum of 11.67 per cent in Rae Bareli and maximum of 18 per cent in Allahabad as against the State average of 27.38 per cent. Out of the 219 total educated persons including literates, the percentage of

Table 2.3 : Educational Status of the Sample Households
(Number of persons)

Sl. Educational No. Status	Meerut	Rae Barelli	Allahabad	Combined
1. Total educated including literates	85 (17.41)	53 (11.67)	81 (18.00)	219 (15.73)
(i) Literates	22	13	30	65
(ii) Primary	28	25	37	90
(iii) Junior High School	28	12	8	48
(iv) High School	5	3	6	14
(v) Intermediate	2	Nil	Nil	2
2. Total illiterates	403 (82.59)	401 (88.33)	369 (82.00)	1173 (84.27)
TOTAL	488 (100.00)	454 (100.00)	450 (100.00)	1392 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses against Sl. No. 1 and 2 denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source: Primary Investigation.

those educated upto Junior High School is as high as 93 and the remaining 7 per cent have got their education upto High School or Intermediate only. None of the persons among the sample households hold the graduate or post-graduate degree. This shows that majority of the population constituted by the Scheduled Caste and backward class in the selected areas of the study is extremely poor in the matter of educational development.

4. Households Occupation

About 88 per cent of the sample households have 'labour' as their main occupation, whereas the percentage for those engaged in agriculture comes to 12 (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 : Distribution of Sample Households by Occupations

Sl. No.	Occupations	(Number)							
		MEERUT		RAE BARELLI		ALLAHABAD		COMBINED	
		M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S
1.	Agriculture	8	22	17	68	11	42	36 (12.00)	132 (44.00)
2.	Service	1	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	1 (0.33)	1 (0.33)
3.	Labour	91	59	83	31	89	58	263 (87.67)	148 (49.34)
4.	Others	Nil	19	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil (0.00)	19 (6.33)
TOTAL		100	100	100	100	100	100	300 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Note : 'M' and 'S' in the above table stand for 'Main' and 'Subsidiary' occupations. Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source: Primary Investigation.

'Service' is found to be the main occupation in case of one household only. On the other hand, majority of the sample households are having 'agriculture' or 'labour' as the subsidiary occupation.

5. Size of Land Holding

According to the prescribed guidelines, only rural landless agricultural labourers were to be made beneficiary participants of RLEG Programme. But the distribution of sample households by size of land holding reveals that only 44.33 per cent of the total sample households belong to the category of landless agricultural labour households (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 : Distribution of Sample Households By
Size of Land Holding

Sl. No.	Size of land holding	(Number of households)			
		Meerut	Rae Barelli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Landless	66	18	49	133 (44.33)
2.	Below 0.5 ha.	29	76	51	156 (52.00)
3.	0.5 to < 1.0 ha.	5	4	Nil	9 (3.00)
4.	1.0 to < 2.0 ha.	Nil	2	Nil	2 (0.67)
TOTAL		100	100	100	300 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to verticle total.

Source : Primary Investigation.

The landless constitute 66 per cent of the sample households in Meerut and 49 per cent in Allahabad but only 18 per cent in Rae Bareli. Of the remaining sample households, 52 per cent have land holdings below 0.5 ha. and those owning land between 0.5 ha. and below 2.0 ha. work out to 3.67 per cent.

It thus seems that selection of beneficiary participants has not been done strictly in accordance with the guidelines.

In addition, the number of sample households opting for land leased in is found to be 33, out of which 26 have already been owning land and the remaining 7 belong to the category of 'landless'.

6. Activity Status

As stated earlier, the population belonging to the age-group of '15-60 years' account for 57.04 per cent of the total population of the sample households. In this age-group, as many as 83.50 per cent of the total population constitute the labour force (workers plus unemployed) as against only 57.52 per cent in whole of the State. Regarding the activity status, we notice that the total labour force available with the sample households excepting only one person, is employed (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 : Activity Status of the Sample Households

(Number of persons)					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Meerut	Rae Bareilly	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Child	163 (33.40)	140 (30.84)	94 (20.89)	397 (28.52)
2.	Student	38 (7.79)	18 (3.96)	32 (7.11)	88 (6.32)
3.	Working	191 (39.14)	218 (48.02)	253 (56.22)	662 (47.56)
4.	Unemployed	1 (0.20)	Nil (0.00)	Nil (0.00)	1 (0.07)
5.	Housewife	54 (11.07)	50 (11.01)	36 (8.00)	140 (10.06)
6.	Retired/disabled	41 (8.40)	28 (6.17)	35 (7.78)	104 (7.47)
TOTAL		488 (100.00)	454 (100.00)	450 (100.00)	1392 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source : Primary Investigation.

The percentage of workers to the total population comes to 47.56, whereas those falling in the categories of children and students account for 28.52 and 6.32 per cent respectively. Retired/disabled persons constitute 7.47 per cent of the total population and the females looking after household affairs work out 10.06 per cent.

7. Worker Status and Occupational Structure

Regarding the working status of the employed persons, it is noticed that nearly 49 per cent of the total workers are engaged in the capacity of employees and those looking after their own enterprise are about 11 per cent (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7 : Working Status of the Employed Persons

Sl. No.	Working status	(Number of workers)			
		Meerut	Rae Bareilly	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Employee	401 (52.88)	98 (44.95)	127 (50.20)	326 (49.25)
2.	Self employed	63 (32.98)	7 (3.22)	Nil (0.00)	70 (10.57)
3.	Employee and Self employed	27 (14.14)	113 (51.83)	126 (49.80)	266 (40.18)
TOTAL		191 (100.00)	218 (100.00)	253 (100.00)	662 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source : Primary Investigation.

Remaining 40 per cent of workers have a mixed status : they work as employees for some time and are self employed in their own activities rest of the time.

So far as occupational structure of the employed persons is concerned, a slightly higher than 41 per cent of the total workers with the sample households are employed solely as labour and those engaged in both own agriculture and wage labour constitute about 49 per cent (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 : Occupational Structure of Employed Persons

(Number of workers)

Sl. No.	Occupations	Meerut	Rae Barelli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Agriculture	Nil (0.00)	5 (2.29)	7 (2.77)	12 (1.81)
2.	Service	3 (1.57)	Nil (0.00)	Nil (0.00)	3 (0.45)
3.	Labour	91 (47.64)	49 (22.48)	133 (52.57)	273 (41.24)
4.	Agriculture and Labour	51 (26.71)	162 (74.31)	113 (44.66)	326 (49.25)
5.	Others	46 (24.08)	2 (0.92)	Nil (0.00)	48 (7.25)
TOTAL		191 (100.00)	218 (100.00)	253 (100.00)	662 (100.00)

Note : Of the forty eight workers placed in the category of 'others' in the above table, those engaged in animal husbandry are 41 in Meerut and two in Raebarelli. Of the remaining five workers of this category in Meerut, two are engaged in pottery and one each in 'Tanga', 'Contract work', and 'agriculture and business'. Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source : Primary Investigation.

The proportion of persons employed as labour is the highest (52.57%) in Allahabad and the lowest (22.48%) in Raebarelli. But the proportion of persons engaged in the kind of mixed occupation, i.e., agriculture and labour is the highest (74.31%) in Raebareli and the lowest (26.71%) in Meerut. Moreover, the

persons engaged exclusively in agriculture are hardly two per cent of the total employed persons. Other occupations like animal husbandry account for around 7 per cent of workers and they are mainly concentrated in Meerut district only.

8. Aggregate and Per Capita Income

The sources of income at the household level are identified as agriculture, animal husbandry, household industry, wage labour and others. However, the chief among these is the wage labour contributing more than 75 per cent to the total income of the sample households (Table 2.9). The next in importance

Table 2.9 : Income from Various Sources to Sample Households Before Participation in RLEGP - 1984-85

(Rs.)

Sl. No.	Sources of income	Meerut	Rae Bareilly	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Agriculture	13,050 (3.35)	36,080 (13.00)	12,900 (4.52)	62,030 (6.51)
2.	Animal husbandry	98,990 (25.39)	30,500 (10.99)	13,500 (4.73)	1,42,990 (15.00)
3.	Household industry	1,500 (0.38)	1,000 (0.36)	- (0.00)	2,500 (0.26)
4.	Wage labour	2,52,810 (64.84)	2,06,765 (74.50)	2,56,859 (89.91)	7,16,434 (75.17)
5.	Others	23,550 (6.04)	3,200 (1.15)	2,400 (0.84)	29,150 (3.06)
TOTAL		3,89,900 (100.00)	2,77,545 (100.00)	2,85,659 (100.00)	9,53,104 (100.00)
Annual Per Capita Income		799	611	635	685

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical totals.

Source : Primary Investigation.

is the allied activity of animal husbandry contributing a share of 15 per cent to the total income. Agriculture stands third with a contribution of 6.51 per cent and the share of other sources in total income works out to 3.06 per cent. Household industry has an almost negligible contribution to the household income. The annual per capita income of all the sample households during 1984-85 before their participation in RLEG Programme is estimated at Rs.685/- as against the yardstick of Rs.700/- fixed by the Planning Commission for estimating the proportion of people falling below the poverty line. Per capita income however, shows a wide variation from one district to another; ranging from Rs.611/- in Rae Bareilly to Rs.635/- in Allahabad and Rs.799/- in Meerut.

Based on the above estimates, the percentage of sample households falling below the poverty line (i.e., having per capita income below Rs.700/-) before their participation in RLEG Programme during 1984-85 comes to 61 (Table 2.10). Whereas

Table 2.10 : Distribution of Sample Households by Their Per Capita Income Before Participation in RLEG - 1984-85

Sl. No.	Range of per capita income	(Number of households)			
		Meerut	Rae Bareilly	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Below Rs.500/-	11	33	25	69
2.	Rs. 500 - < Rs.700/-	44	32	38	114
TOTAL (A)		55	65	63	183 (61.00)
3.	Rs.700 - < Rs.900	15	16	18	49
4.	Rs.900 and above	30	19	19	68
TOTAL (B)		45	35	37	117 (39.00)
TOTAL (A + B)		100	100	100	300

Note : Figures given in parentheses against total 'A' and total 'B' denote percentages to vertical total (A+B).

Source: Primary Investigation.

those occupying their positions above the poverty line are found to be 39 per cent, with minimum of 35 per cent in Rae Bareilly and maximum of 45 per cent in Meerut. Hence, it appears that the economic status of the rural landless agricultural households of Raebareilly district is low as compared to those of Allahabad and Meerut districts.

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Chapter-3

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION : GUIDELINES AND FOLLOW UP

1. Coordination At the State Level

At the State level, two committees known as 'the State Level Coordination and Monitoring Committee for Rural Development' and the 'Project Approval Committee' were set up in the beginning to coordinate and closely watch the work of RLEG Programme. The coordination of planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme has been the responsibility of the former, whereas the latter with representatives of Planning, Finance and Rural Development departments looks after the work of sectoral and area-wise allocation of RLEG funds, formulation and technical approval of the projects, submission of approved projects to the Central Committee for sanction of finance and periodic review of the implementation of the sanctioned projects. To review and monitor the progress, monthly, quarterly and annual progress reports of RLEG Programme are procured regularly by the Government from different districts of the State. But inspite of having this kind of well laid out organisational set up, we find shortfalls in achievements of financial and physical targets of the programme in the State, as would be evident from the Table 3.1.

As shown in Table 3.1, the shortfall in achievement of the financial target of the programme at the State level during 1984-85 was considerably high, i.e., 69.65 per cent, whereas the corresponding shortfall in physical target accounted for 55.99 per cent. This shows that there has been some basic

Table 3.1 : Shortfalls in Achievements of Financial and Physical Targets of RLEGP in the State During 1984-85

Sl. No.	Particulars	Financial (Rs. lakh)	Physical (Lakh mandays)
1.	Targets	21244.11	1223.76
2.	Achievements	6447.71	538.57
3.	Shortfalls (%)	69.65	55.99

Source : Department of Rural Development, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Secretariat, Lucknow.

lacuna in planning, implementation and monitoring of RLEG Programme, as a result of which the progress could not be achieved to a desired extent. One of the plausible reasons as identified through scrutiny of the records is that meetings of the Coordination and Monitoring Committee were not held regularly at the State level especially during the period 1984-85.

It is, however, heartening to note that the norm fixed for expenditure on the wage component, which should have not been, in any case, less than 50 per cent of its total expenditure, has been followed in toto, as the percentage of wage component expenditure to total expenditure under RLEG Programme in the State during 1984-85 exceeded the norm and worked out as high as 59 per cent. Another point that needs to be noted with satisfaction is that RLEG Programme has benefited the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes families to a considerable extent. This is witnessed by the share of these castes in the

total mandays employment which was 42.32 per cent in the State during the year 1984-85.

2. Role of District and Block Level Officials

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) has been made responsible to coordinate the planning and implementation work of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) at the district level. The district level offices, which are directly associated with this programme, consist of mainly Public Works Department (PWD), Major and Minor Irrigation, Rural Engineering Service (RES), Forest Department, Zila Parishad, Cane Development Council and Soil Conservation. The agency calls for projects from these offices, following the major contents of the guidelines circulated to them. The projects, thus formulated by the concerning departments are finalised in DRDA meetings and thereafter sent to the State headquarters for approval and sanction of finance. Once the funds are released from the Central Committee, Government of India, concerning departments are asked to carry out implementation of the sanctioned projects.

Further to review the progress and monitor implementation of the projects, the DRDA collects monthly progress reports from these departments on the prescribed district level pro-forme. The progress of on-going RLEG projects is aggregated at the district level and sent to the State headquarters after discussing the same in the DRDA meeting. Thus, it is clear that planning and implementation of RLEG Projects is the major responsibility of the concerning district level offices only.

Reviewing the progress of RLEG projects at the district level, we also notice shortfalls in achievements of financial and physical targets of the programme in the selected districts during 1984-85, as would be evident from the following table:

Table 3.2 : Shortfalls in Achievements of Financial and Physical Targets of RLEG Programme in the Selected Districts During 1984-85

Sl. No.	Particular	Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
A. <u>Financial</u> (Rs. lakh)					
1.	Target	437.00	525.43	200.00	1162.43
2.	Achievement	265.94	289.96	102.27	658.17
3.	Shortfall (%)	39.14	44.79	48.86	43.38
B. <u>Physical</u> (Lakh Mandays)					
1.	Target	26.94	33.91	9.67	70.52
2.	Achievement	12.93	23.81	5.91	42.65
3.	Shortfall (%)	52.00	29.78	38.88	39.52

Source : Records of DRDA of Selected Districts.

The shortfall in achievements of the financial targets of the programme in respect of all the three selected districts during 1984-85 was 43.38 per cent with minimum (39.14%) in Meerut and maximum (48.86%) in Allahabad. Whereas the corresponding shortfall in achievement of physical targets (i.e., total mandays employment) recorded to be 39.52 per cent, showing a wide variation from 29.78 per cent in Raebareli to 52.00 per cent in Meerut.

The block officials do not have any direct association with this programme at all. Since these officials have direct links with the people at the grass-root level, their effective involvement is invariably needed for successful planning and implementation of RLEG Programme. Besides assisting the concerning district level officials in formulation of projects, their services can be fruitfully utilised for selection of sites, selection of rural landless labourers and supervision and monitoring the implementation of the work projects.

3. Engagement of Contractors/Middlemen

As prescribed in the Guidelines, there should have been a complete ban on engagement of contractors/middlemen or any such intermediate agency for execution of the work project under the programme. An underlying idea was that it would help ensure percolation of full benefits of wages to workers and avoid enhancement of cost on account of commission payable to these agencies. But contrary to this, although the responsibility of the project execution lies with the Junior Engineers of the concerning departments, we learn through our field survey that execution of the work project in all the three selected areas was carried out by the effective involvement of contractors/middlemen. We find that as many as 255 of the 300 total respondents were engaged in the project work through mates who happen to be employees of contractors, whereas the remaining 45 persons got their employment through contractors themselves. The mates are reported to be present on the work site during the working hours. They take attendance

of the workers and carry out other supervisory works, besides helping Junior Engineers in preparing muster rolls.

During the period of investigation, it was reported by the beneficiary participants of Raebareli and Allahabad districts that Contractors/mates used to employ them on piece rate basis. The payment of wages was, therefore, made to them in accordance with the quantum of manual work completed. Whereas in Meerut they employed workers on both time rate and piece rate basis. Owing to this, we notice a wide variation in payment of average daily wages to workers. As stated earlier, besides few cases of non-payment, average daily wages paid to workers ranged from Rs.4/- to Rs.10/- in Allahabad, Rs.5/- to Rs.8/- in Rae Bareli and Rs.9.50 to Rs.15/- in Meerut. Thus, Contractors/Middlemen seem to have played an exploitative role in making payment of daily wages to workers.

4. Selection of Beneficiary Participants

No definite procedure was prescribed for identification of beneficiaries under RLEG Programme in Uttar Pradesh upto April, 1985. Nor any block official functionary was entrusted with the responsibility of identifying rural landless labourers as beneficiary participants under the scheme. The contractors/mates used to employ arbitrarily the persons living in the neighbouring villages of the project sites for doing the manual work. With the result, in our field survey we find that out of the 300 sample households as many as about 56 per cent were having ownership of land with them. Following the guidelines

in strict sense, such households should have not figured as participants in the programme.

On May 3, 1985, the State Government issued circular to all DRD Agencies and entrusted the responsibility of identifying beneficiary participants under the programme to Block Development Officers who would prepare the list of rural landless households in the villages falling within the radius of 10 Kms. from the work site. But this task was to be taken up on an experimental basis in only five blocks of each district where RLEG Programme was already under operation. Since the programme is being run through out the State, it would be essential to take up the task of identifying rural landless labourers in all the blocks of the State where RLEG Programme is under implementation. Moreover, beside block development officer, two more persons, concerning village level worker (VLW) and Pradhan should also be associated with the task of identification.

5. Mandays Employment : Availability and Adequacy

Out of the total 300 sample households, the number of those, who were employed in RLEG project for less than 100 days, was as high as 218. Hence, the objective of providing guarantee of employment to at least one member of every landless labour household upto 100 days in a year seem to have not been achieved through implementation of RLEG Programme. An enquiry with the respondents having worked for less than 100 days in the project was further made regarding their availability to work for longer period of time. As many as 181 of

them responded that they were willing to further continue the project work, as would be evident from the following table:

Table 3.3 : Availability of Participants for Longer Duration (100 days and above) of Project Work

Sl. No.	District	Available	Not available	Not applicable	Total
1.	Meerut	29	15	56	100
2.	Raebareli	88	12	Nil	100
3.	Allahabad	64	10	26	100
	Combined	181 (60.33)	37 (12.33)	82 (27.34)	300 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to total.

Source: Primary Investigation.

The remaining 37 respondents were of the opinion that they had no time to continue the project work any more. We further notice that majority of the selected beneficiary participants of Allahabad and Raebareli districts having worked for less than 100 days were willing to continue the project work for longer duration. Contrary to this, in Meerut district out of the total 100 respondents, as many as 56 worked in the project for a longer period exceeding 100 days. Of the 44 respondents who worked on projects for less than 100 days, 29 respondents stated to have been available for further project work and remaining 15 reported non-availability of time to work longer on the projects.

Further we tried to explore the reasons which prevented the respondents from working in the project for longer duration. 'Project work completed' was one of the reasons stated by the 103 out of 181 respondents, as shown in the following table:

Table 3.4 : Reasons for Preventing the Participants from Doing Project Work for Longer Duration

(Multiple Response)					
Sl. No.	Reasons	Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Irregular payment of wages	Nil	66	67	133 (73.48)
2.	Project work completed	29	39	35	103 (56.91)
3.	Low wages	10	72	64	146 (80.66)
4.	No payment of wages at all	Nil	12	5	17 (9.39)
5.	Others (Refusal by contractor and illness)	8	15	19	42 (23.20)
Base		29	88	64	181

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to the base.

Source : Primary Investigation.

Further, 133 respondents disassociated themselves from the project work because of untimely payment of wages and 146 gave up work in the project as they found the wages paid to them low.

Non-payment of wages was reported to be the reason for discontinuation of work in the case of 17 respondents, mostly in Raebareli. Other reasons like 'refusal by contractors' and 'illness' prevented continuation of work in the case of 42 respondents who were not available for further project work because of shortage of time, illness and self work.

6. Payment of Wages : Mode, Rates and Time Frequency

Regarding the mode of payment of wages, a slightly higher than 50 per cent of the total respondents stated that they received their wages in 'cash' only and majority of them belonged to Allahabad district. Rough quality of wheat and distant locations of Consumers Cooperative Stores were reported to be the reasons for not accepting part of the wages in kind. On the other hand, nearly 44 per cent respondents stated that they received wages in both 'cash' and 'kind'. About 6 per cent respondents did not receive any wages, at all, as reported earlier. The recipients of wages were further asked to state whether they were satisfied with the amount of daily wages paid to them. About 40 per cent of such respondents were satisfied with the average daily wages paid to them and those reporting dissatisfied were about 60 per cent (Table 3.5).

The payment of low wages was stated to be the main reason of their dissatisfaction. This question was not applicable in cases of 17 respondents, who inspite of doing project work for some days, were not paid their wages at all.

Table 3.5 : Responses Regarding the Satisfaction of Participants with the Payment of Daily Wages

(Number)					
Sl. No.	Response	Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Satisfied	32	43	38	113 (39.93)
2.	Not Satisfied	68	45	57	170 (60.07)
	Base	100	88	95	283 (100.00)
	Not applicable	Nil	12	5	17
	TOTAL	100	100	100	300

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to the base.

Source : Primary Investigation.

A slightly less than 51 per cent of the total respondents stated that payment of their wages was made weekly/fortnightly as would be evident from the Table 3.6.

About 40 per cent of them reported that there was no fixed period for making payment of their wages. According to another 3 per cent, the payment of wages was made on monthly basis and those who were expected not to respond on this question because of non-payment of their wages were about 6 per cent.

Table 3.6 : Frequency of Making Wage Payment to Participants

Sl. No.	Frequency				(Number)
		Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Weekly	68	9	4	81 (27.00)
2.	Fortnightly	32	22	17	71 (23.67)
3.	Monthly	Nil	Nil	10	10 (3.33)
4.	No fixed time	Nil	57	64	121 (40.33)
5.	No payment at all	Nil	12	5	17 (5.67)
TOTAL		100	100	100	300 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to the total.

Source : Primary Investigation.

7. Distribution of Foodgrains to Workers

According to the Central Guidelines, one Kg. of foodgrains per beneficiary participant per day was to be given as part of the wages in foodgrains and the balance be paid in cash. However, the insistence of making part payment of wages in kind may be relaxed by the State Government considering the foodgrains availability, capability of the public distribution system and the acceptability of foodgrains by the workers. In addition to this, an announcement was made by the State Government to provide extra one Kg. of foodgrains per participant per day free of cost under the programme during 1984-85.

In regard to the follow up of the above guidelines, we have seen in practice that coupons are provided to the workers under the programme to collect their shares of foodgrains from the selected Consumers' Cooperative Stores/Fair Price Shops. As stated earlier, a slightly higher than 50 per cent of the respondents received their wages in cash only and majority of them belonged to Allahabad. Rough quality of wheat, distant locations of Consumers Cooperative Stores were reported to be the reasons of not accepting part of their wages in kind. Moreover, most of the participants, who received their wages in both 'cash' and 'kind', were also not satisfied with the distribution of foodgrains because of the poor quality of wheat, distant locations of Consumers Cooperative Stores and non-availability of foodgrains timely.

Above all, it is surprising to note that the Government instructions to provide extra one Kg. of foodgrains free of cost per worker per day were followed in the selected areas of Meerut only and beneficiaries in the selected areas of the other two districts - Raebareli and Allahabad - were completely deprived of this facility. In view of these reasons, it would be appropriate to revise the mode of payment to workers and confine it to cash payment only.

8. Common Facilities at Work Sites

The common facilities like drinking water, first-aid, creches for children and rest sheds were reported to be almost non-existent in the selected areas of the project work. However, in case of Meerut it was reported by 34 respondents that 'First Aid Box' was available at the site of the work project.

Chapter-4

IMPACT OF RLEG PROGRAMME ON EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

The benefits likely to flow from implementation of RLEG Programme are of two kinds: direct and indirect. The former, which starts accruing immediately after bringing the project under implementation consists of generation of both additional wage labour employment and additional income to the sample households. Whereas the latter starts accruing to the households of the surrounding areas obviously after completion of the work project like construction of link roads, drains and irrigation Guls/Channels. Owing to the problem of quantification in measuring indirect benefits, our major thrust in this chapter would be to analyse the direct benefits in terms of employment and income which have been enjoyed by the sample households as a result of implementation of RLEG projects in selected areas of the study during 1984-85. Assessment of indirect benefits, which start accruing to the households of the surrounding areas in a little longer period, is confined here only to the description of the likelihood of their occurrence based on the responses of the selected beneficiary participants.

1. Impact of RLEG Programme on Employment Generation

According to the following table, the total wage labour employment with all the sample households excluding that of generated through the project work during 1984-85 was 80,211 mandays shared by Meerut, Raebarcli and Allahabad in proportion to 23.38 per cent, 37.54 per cent and 39.08 per cent respectively.

Table 4.1 : Generation of Additional Wage Labour
Employment (Mandays) Through RLEG
Programme During 1984-85

(Mandays)					
Sl. No.	Wage labour employment (Mandays)	Meerut	Rae bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Total mandays employed before project work	18,752	30,112	31,347	80,211
2.	Additional mandays generated by the project work	7,397 (39.45)	1,398 (4.64)	5,225 (16.67)	14,020 (17.48)
3.	Total mandays employed after project work (2+1)	26,149	31,510	36,572	94,231
4.	Average mandays employment per sample household through project work	74	14	52	47 ✓

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages of additional mandays at Sl. No.2 to the total at Sl.No.1

Source : Primary Investigation.

On the other hand, the additional wage labour employment generated through implementation of RLEG Programme to all the sample households during the same year worked out to 14,020 mandays resulting in an increase of 17.48 per cent in their total mandays employment before implementation of the programme. However, the corresponding percentage increase in mandays employment showed a wide variation from 4.64 in Raebareli to 39.45 in Meerut and 16.67 in Allahabad. Thus, we notice that the benefits of the programme in terms of mandays employment

have been enjoyed by the latter two districts to a large extent as compared to Raebareli. This is also supported by the average mandays employment generated per sample household through the project work which is found to be the highest (74) in Meerut followed by 52 in Allahabad and only 14 in Raebareli, yielding an average of 47 for the total sample size.

According to the Central Guidelines, at least one member of every rural landless agricultural household should have been provided labour employment upto 100 mandays under the project. But our investigations reveal that this criterion was not adhered to in actual practice. Assuming the participation of only single person from each of the sample households in the programme, we notice that 50 per cent of the total sample households could get wage labour employment in the project for less than 50 days only (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 : Distribution of Sample Households By Their Wage Labour Employment (Mandays) in RLEG Programme During 1984-85

Sl. No.	Wage labour employment (Mandays)	(Number of sample households)			
		Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Below 50 days	33	89	28	150 (50.00)
2.	50 - <100 days	11	11	46	68 (22.67)
3.	100 days and above	56	Nil	26	82 (27.33)
TOTAL		100	100	100	300 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical total.

Source: Primary Investigation.

Those securing employment in the range of '50 to below 100 days' constituted about 23 per cent of the total sample households. Besides, there were only about 27 per cent sample households from the two districts of Meerut and Allahabad which could get employment for '100 days and above' in the project. None of the beneficiary participants could get employment of this level in Raebareli district.

2. Impact of RLEG Programme on Income Generation

Turning to the aspect of income, we find that the total income of the sample households before participation in the project work during 1984-85 was approximately Rs.9.53 lakh (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 : Generation of Additional Income Through
RLEG Programme During 1984-85

(Rs.)					
Sl. No.	Income of sample households	Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Total income before project work	3,89,900	2,77,545	2,85,659	9,53,104
2.	Additional income through project work	70,572 (18.10)	6,797 (2.45)	42,123 (14.75)	1,19,492 (12.54)
3.	Total income after project work	4,60,472	2,84,342	3,27,782	10,72,596
4.	Average additional income per sample household through project work	706	68	421	398

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages of additional income at Sl. No.2 to the total income at Sl. No.1.

Source: Primary Investigation.

The additional income generated to the sample households through the project work during the same year was reported to be approximately Rs.1.19 lakh, showing an increase of 12.54 per cent in the total income of the sample households before their participation in the project work. However, the corresponding percentage increase in additional income generated to the sample households through the project work showed a considerable difference from one district to another, the highest (18.10%) being in Meerut and the lowest (2.45%) in Raebareli, as against 14.75 per cent in Allahabad. Again, we notice that Meerut and Allahabad have enjoyed the larger share of benefits in terms of additional income generated too. The average additional income generated per sample household through the project work which is found to be the highest (Rs.706/-) in Meerut followed by Rs.421/- in Allahabad and only Rs.68/- in Raebareli as against the average of Rs.398/- for the total size of sample households.

Further, through an assessment of the per capita income of the sample households separately for the periods before and after project work during 1984-85 it is quite clear that against the total sample size of 300, the number of those with below poverty line income (i.e., per capita income less than Rs.700/-) has considerably reduced from 183 before their participation to 138 after their participation in the project work, as would be evident from the following table :

Table 4.4 : Distribution of Sample Households by
Their Per Capita Income Before and After
Project Work During 1984-85

Sl. No.	Range of per capita income	(Number of sample households)							
		MEERUT		RAE BARELI		ALLAHABAD		COMBINED	
		BPW	APW	BPW	APW	BPW	APW	BPW	APW
1.	Below Rs.500	11	2	33	29	25	14	69	45
2.	Rs.500- < Rs.700	44	27	32	35	38	31	114	93
TOTAL (A)		55	29	65	64	63	45	183 (61.00)	138 (46.00)
3.	Rs.700- < Rs.900	15	21	16	17	18	31	49	69
4.	Rs.900- & above	30	50	19	19	19	24	68	93
TOTAL (B)		45	71	35	36	37	55	117 (39.00)	162 (54.00)
FINAL TOTAL (A + B)		100	100	100	100	100	100	300 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to
Final totals.

'BPW' stands for before project work and 'APW' denotes
after project work.

Source: Primary Investigation.

Thus, the number of sample households crossing the poverty line has gone up from 117 to 162. Besides, the inter-district analysis of the above table indicates that the percentage of sample households falling below the poverty line is still the highest (64) in Raebareli followed by 45 per cent in Allahabad and 29 per cent in Meerut. However, in sum, the implementation of RLEG Programme has, undoubtedly helped significantly in generating additional income and employment to the rural landless agricultural households and thereby raising the income levels of a good number of them above the poverty line during the reference year.

3. Accrual of Indirect Benefits from Physical Assets

Regarding the indirect benefits of the RLEG project, efforts were made at the time of field investigation to enquire from the respondents about the manner in which the physical assets, i.e., link roads, drains, Guls/channels, etc. created under the programme in the selected areas would prove to be beneficial in raising the socio-economic status of the local people. Out of the total 300 respondents, about 67 per cent were of the view that the physical assets particularly construction of irrigation Guls/Channels would help in raising agricultural productivity, as would be evident from the following table :

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Table 4.5 : Opinion Regarding the Impact of Physical Assets Created under the Project on Socio-Economic Status of the Local People

(Multiple response)

Sl. No.	Factors effecting socio-economic improvement	Meerut	Rae Bareli	Allahabad	Combined
1.	Increased productivity	82	52	68	202 (67.33)
2.	Higher mobility of people	36	98	74	208 (69.33)
3.	Better marketing facilities	33	70	50	153 (51.00)
4.	Higher wages	3	7	8	18 (6.00)
5.	Others (Protection from flood)	25	Nil	17	42 (14.00)
Base : Number of sample households		100	100	100	300

Note : Figures given in parentheses denote percentages to vertical total.

Source: Primary Investigation.

Moreover, about 69 per cent of the respondents emphasised that construction of link roads would go a long way in favour of higher mobility of people and those viewing such physical assets effecting better marketing facilities accounted for 51 per cent of the total respondents. Besides, the 'higher wages' or 'protection from flood' were the other gains of these physical assets as stated by 14 per cent of them.

Chapter-5

CONCLUSION

According to the Central Guidelines, only Rural landless labour households were to be covered under the RLEG Programme. But in our study, the distribution of sample households by size of land holdings reveals that about 56 per cent of the selected households had ownership of land with them upto two hectares during 1984-85. This means that marginal farmers were also considered as beneficiary participants of the programme at the time of its implementation. As a matter of fact marginal farmers, in general, do not depend solely upon cultivation for their livelihood and majority of them also hire out labour to earn their household income. In fact, in many cases wage labour is found to be the main occupation. Hence, in principle, it would be desirable to accommodate marginal farmers as beneficiary participants in RLEG Programme and redesignate its title as 'Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP).

One of the objectives of the programme has been to provide guarantee of employment to at least one member of every landless household upto 100 days in a year. But one of the interesting findings of our study is that out of the 300 sample households, as many as 218 participants got employment in the programme for less than 100 days only. Besides, none of the beneficiary participants of Raebareli district could get employment for 100 days and above. This shows that the programme has not ~~said~~ to be effective in providing guarantee of employment days to landless households and the basic objective of programme could not be fulfilled.

Table - 2 : Cluster Centroids for the Selected Indicators of Resource Base

Clusters	No. of Dist- ricts	Forest as percent- age to reporting area (1974-75)	Culturable waste as percentage to total reporting area (1974-75)	Current fallow and net area sown as percentage to total reporting area (1974-75)	Other fallows and culturable waste as percentage to total reporting area (1974-75)	Intensity of cro- pping (1974-75)	Percentage of un- utilized to total irrigation poten- tial (1974-75)	Percentage of balance of under- ground water to safe yield (1974-75)	Net irrigated area as percentage to net area sown (1974-75)
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
II	6	66.75	6.20	11.37	6.73	154.20	1.12	82.88	8.23
III	7	2.64	4.74	74.57	7.67	136.24	18.93	23.31	53.76
IV	7	10.67	5.17	64.44	7.40	118.79	9.01	71.59	21.01
V	13	2.83	4.34	72.79	6.68	131.98	9.47	61.03	42.33
VI	12	5.31	3.30	73.74	5.57	131.47	14.80	51.63	49.17
VII	6	1.13	3.10	78.52	5.25	145.62	4.78	32.78	82.28
VIII	3	53.80	5.53	26.97	8.47	145.00	14.02	80.22	32.07
IX	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mean Vector (U.P.)		14.14	4.43	63.42	6.60	135.41	10.62	55.77	43.62
Standard Deviation (U.P.)		22.81	2.39	22.79	9.32	14.00	8.55	21.07	20.99